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P E T S ,  
A BOOK FOR THE  
OLD & YOUNG  
BY  
MAJOR EGERTON LEIGH

Admiral Gustav Lege for his  
father March 1863

15'

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# P E T S .









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"WHAT CAN BE TAMED"

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P E T S



R. BUSSEY, Del.

"WHAT CAN BE 'TAMED'"

M. MONTAGU & MONTAGU

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# P E T S

A PAPER.

DEDICATED TO ALL WHO DO NOT

SPELL PETS—PESTS.

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*Read at the Mechanics' Institution at the  
Music Hall, Chester.*

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LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS,

AND ROBERTS.

MANCHESTER: GEORGE SIMMS.

1859.



## *A PAPER ON PETS.*

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WHEN I think of those who have preceded and of those who are to follow me in this place, — when I consider the solidity of their subjects and the lightness and comparative frivolity of mine, I might naturally despair of arresting your attention, or of amusing your minds. But our Arctic discoverers (who took with them an ox condensed into the size of a snuff-box) found that, in addition to actual nourishment, bulk was also requisite, to fill up the hiatus left by the condensed food, so as to make it beneficial instead of injurious to the constitution ; and however good the joint may be, the after sweets and fruit are not to be despised ; and I offer you to-night a sort of dessert which I hope may agree with you, and that you will not find my almonds bitter, nor my apples crabs.

But if my subject may be frivolous, it is, I venture to say, a frivolity to which the majority of my hearers, in different ways, have been, are, or will be, victims. Like the inscription on a statue to Love in the gardens at Malmaison —

Quiconque tu es, reconnais ton maître  
Qui est qui l'a été ou qui peut l'être.

Whoe'er thou art, thy master see  
That is or has been or may be.

The love of Pets is one of the flowers of civilization, a feeling either openly apparent or lying dormant until warmed into existence by circumstances, like the fire hid in the cold steel till it comes in contact with the flint. Many may carry this affection too far, but on the whole there is something humanizing in a Pet, which makes the heart open to the genial warmth of kindness, like the rose bud expanding its long folded leaves when kissed by the sunbeam. The word Pet is derived by some from the French word "petit," and there are similar words in Italian, Irish, Dutch, and even Persian, meaning bosom friend, idol, dear, &c. I would rather derive it from the Latin *petere*, to seek, as one of the characteristics (I may

say one of the unamiabilities) of Pets is continually to be looking out and seeking for something for themselves. The derivation from the French "petit" may justly be preferred by others, as in many languages "diminutives" (as they are called) are peculiarly in use for fondling purposes. The French word "*enfantiller*, to talk affectionate nonsense to a child," is a very expressive instance of this. The other meaning of Pet is *ill-temper*, easily traceable to the unhappy effect of spoiling the Pet, which, whether human or animal, we are all too much inclined to do.

I shall not touch upon human Pets further than to recommend that no affectionate mamma (if she only values her own peace) should ever run the risk of *deserving* the toast proposed by an irritated old bachelor, upon the ladies and a batch of spoilt children leaving the dining room, viz.,

"The immortal memory of the good King Herod."

Gratitude sometimes causes the adoption of a Pet. A dog that has saved your own or child's life, or, as in the case of Lord Forbes's dog, which discovered that the castle was on



fire and saved the inmates, has a right to be regarded during the rest of its life with care, gratitude, and affection. We hear of a Turkish Emperor who rewarded a horse which had carried him safely through danger by giving him a marble stable, an ivory manger, a rack of silver, shoeing him with gold, settling on him estates, appointing servants to wait on him, &c. The horror of solitude, whether natural or compulsory, is one of the greatest inducements to drive men to endeavour to relieve themselves from the monotonous oppression of the eternal self, by striving to gain the affection and extract sympathy from anything possessing life. We hear of prisoners taming the sparrows that twittered on the bars of their cell, and striking up friendship of a most ardent nature with a stray rat or mouse; and we have, I have no doubt, all felt indignant at the conduct of the heartless jailor who, to intensify misery, killed the spider, the sole friend and consolation of some political prisoner sentenced to a life imprisonment. We may many of us have read with interest the account of the pleasures, pains, hopes and fears that a chance-sown seedling, springing up be-

tween the flags of his small exercising court, gave to the poor creature cut off by prison from all communication with the outer world. He called the plant *Picciola* (poor little thing), and the story of the captive's flower expands into a volume.

When the dark cloud was upon the mind of the amiable poet Cowper, the gambols of his pet hares acted beneficially upon his spirits, as the harp of David on Saul, or the clairsach of the fairy Annot Lyle on the gloomy mind of the wild Allan McAulay. In the poet's account of his Pets there is one curious circumstance, — I refer to the great variety of character presented by the three hares. We hear of flowers, ferns, trees (in gardeners language) "sporting varieties" when under cultivation and carefully tended, which never, or at any rate seldom, appear in a wild state. So do tameness and domesticity produce every imaginable "eccentricity," we may call it, in animals. There is scarcely a horse without some peculiarity. I knew one whose particular fancy was window breaking; if he *could* slip his collar at night he invariably employed himself in this riotous manner. Another, in summer, would always

tear off his clothing. A third, whenever he got loose, would, with the greatest assiduity, collect brooms, buckets, curry combs, everything in short portable within reach, and put them all together in his manger. And the fancies and peculiarities of dogs and other animals (some of which I shall bring to your notice to-night) are innumerable. The instinct of self-preservation (the leading feature and first ruling principle of all animals in a wild state) being put to sleep, or having become rusted by their never or very seldom when tamed having to exercise it, the brute mind has time to cultivate eccentricity, which next to the definition of a *cooking animal*, has been generally considered as the peculiar characteristic of man. I venture to say there is scarcely one here to-night, or any absent individual (with whom my hearers may be *thoroughly* acquainted) who has not some fancy, some peculiar idea, some favourite dogma, some absorbing prejudice, some darling pursuit which he does not or has not carried so far as must appear to others (to say the least of it) most peculiar; but as I said before, man is *not* the only eccentric being in the wide field of creation.

Mind, talent and affection do not seem to be considered indispensable ingredients in Pets, particularly in those kept by children. It is hardly possible to imagine a more useless creature than a guinea-pig. It is not eatable; at least *we* do not use it for food, whatever the Chinese may do. The fur is valueless, and the only thing I have ever heard urged in its favour is the very problematical assertion that rats quit its neighbourhood. It is most uninteresting and stupid, yet all those in England (and their name is legion) are kept solely as Pets. Tame rabbits may be classed nearly in the same category; and the tortoise is another animal of which some ten thousand are sold annually in London alone, which, in addition to their being incapable of affording any amusement, are absolutely torpid for six months of every year, during which time a shell kept in a drawer would afford as much pleasure to the owner. I have heard of a lady keeping a large green frog as a Pet; its leaving or seeking the water was found to beat all the barometers, so true a prophet was it of the coming weather. It knew its mistress, who used to receive by post a pill-box of flies for its support.

There is another class of creatures which we occasionally have known to be converted into Pets, which, according to the most authentic ancient receipts, are the legitimate or rather illegitimate ingredients of the witches' chaldron, and the accompaniment of rites unholy, — I refer to toads, snakes and hedgehogs. As Gondoline approaches the witches' festival, on entering the cave where the hellish mysteries were celebrated —

“She saw a snake on the craggy rock,  
It clung by its slimy tail.”

And again —

“Her foot it slipped and she stood aghast,  
She trod on the bloated toad.”

And afterwards, upon coming into the presence of the witches, she finds —

“Their waists were bound with living snakes.”

Not the sort of girdle mentioned by the poet Waller, when, upon finding his mistress's sash, he bursts out into the rhapsody —

“Give me but what this riband bound,  
Take all the rest the world goes round.”

In the witches scene in *Macbeth* we find the hedgehog in doubtful company :

“Thrice and once the hedge pig whined.”

And in the *Bout of Keeldar*, by Leyden :

“The urchin clad in pickles red,  
Clung cowering to his arm,  
The hounds they howled and backwards fled  
As struck by fairy charm.”

Then we have the toad and snake introduced :

“Toad that under the cold stone  
Days and nights hast thirty one  
Sweltered venom sleeping got,  
Boil thou first i'the charmed pot.”

Then —

“Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the chaldron boil and bake.”

Yet all these have been and are probably still kept as Pets. Waller has an address to a lady playing with a snake, a dangerous female amusement from the time of Eve downwards. The hedgehog (or as it is more commonly called the urchin) I have known as a Pet, which appeared regularly at dessert, and made his rounds fearlessly on the table for what he

could get. The hedgehog (sworn foe to snails and slugs) used to be sold in Covent Garden Market for the destruction of cockroaches (which I know by experience exist in countless myriads in this old city); and I have seen them exposed for sale in St. John's Market at Liverpool for a similar purpose. They lie in the ashes all day, and hunt at night when their black prey is afoot. Monkeys are now decidedly out of date, but in former days they seem to have been as regular, or I should rather say as irregular, a part of the establishment of a great house as the piper used to be, and occasionally still is, in some Scotch families. Monkeys must, I conclude, have gone out as china came in, the former being manifestly antagonistic to the latter. Yet they were, I believe, the earliest species of Pet of which we have any authentic record. Two thousand eight hundred and fifty years ago (equivalent to ninety-five generations) the navy of Tarshish brought King Solomon every three years gold and silver, ivory, *apes* and peacocks. I heard of a great cultivator of Pets taking a monkey with him by railway in a basket. A railway official saw something suspicious being, as

he thought, smuggled into the carriage — “You must pay for that dog.” “It is not a dog,” said the traveller. “It is a dog,” said the official, poking his finger so near a hole in the basket as almost to feel the wind of a snap made at him. “It is not a dog but a monkey,” rejoined the owner, “and monkeys don’t pay.” “I don’t care what it is,” said the other, “but it is a hannimal, and hannimals pays.” “I suppose you will next make me pay for *this* animal,” said the irritated traveller, dashing his hand into the breast pocket of his coat, and bringing out a tortoise. “No,” said the official, “that’s not a *hannimal*; that’s a *hinsect*.”

We know that it has been written that “everything is tamed, and hath been tamed,” except the tongue. So that the easiest way of enumerating what may be tamed is by merely mentioning the exception.

No age is free from Pet adoration. It exists in the child, who, to prove his affection, compresses a kitten in a way that would seem to render necessary not only its own nine lives but (as the wag would say) as many more as it could borrow from Plutarch. The child’s love



of a kitten breaks out again in different ages, and exhausts its declining years in the adoration of a parrot, or intense affection for a pug.

Pets have their trials. The extremes of heat and cold are supposed to be prejudicial to life; so are the extremes of fondness and neglect. Many a bright bird has been starved to death in its golden cage.

“But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain  
And form genteel were all in vain,  
And of a transient date;  
For, caught and caged and starved to death,  
In dying sighs my little breath  
Soon passed the wiry gate.”

Many is the Pet that has had to rue favouritism. Their dumbness does not always “plead eloquently” for them. The poet says :

“A favourite has no friends,”

And many a Pet, during the absence of its principal, undergoes the sort of treatment shadowed out a short time since in *Punch*, where a most vicious-looking specimen of “Buttons” exclaims, as he is dragging along a fat, wheezy dog, “Won’t I give thee a jolly good swim now old missus is away.” Too much care may also

be very prejudicial to the well-being of Pets. Two Skye terriers were some time since sent to Edinburgh, with their directions (carefully written on leather) round their necks; but on their journey the dogs, being hungry, eat each other's direction, and the case of the "Unprotected Female" at the station was nothing to theirs.

The human Pets belong to the byegones. Nixon, the Cheshire prophet, after being spoilt with kindness, is said to have been starved to death at court; and fools, dwarfs and human monstrosities have, as *Pets*, quite disappeared. We shall no more hear of a dwarf pie being served up (like the swan and the sturgeon) as a royal dish. The legitimate fool of the present day is the very sharpest fellow that can be discovered to entertain the public at Astley's and similar places, like our friend Mr. Frowde.<sup>1</sup>

Gold and silver fish can hardly be termed Pets, but rather live ornamental objects, and may be ranked with china, glass and other similar articles, the value of which consists in the pleasure they may afford the eye. Still it is said that the annual sale of these jewels of

<sup>1</sup> A clown, a great favourite in Chester.

the water amounts to three or four thousand. The vivarium is a modern improvement on these, and is an ingenious plan for domesticating a fraction of the ocean and its inhabitants in one's own sitting room, and observing their pursuits. A serious difficulty is the endeavour to persuade the various inmates to agree like the happy family. When they begin to feel quite at home they have a nasty trick of proving it, by eating each other. Another difficulty, that of keeping the water of the vivarium fresh, has been obviated by the introduction of seaweed, and by the purifying effect of the oxygen which it is continually disengaging.

There are few that would ever imagine the number of cage-birds disposed of in the metropolis, and they may be divided into those bought entirely for their song, like the nightingale, thrush, blackbird, linnet; those kept for their song and plumage, namely the canary, bullfinch, goldfinch, &c.; the imitators of the human voice, as the parrot, magpie, starling and raven; and those kept solely for their plumage, like the love-birds and other rainbow-tinted denizens of sunny climes. Others, again, are adopted for some peculiar talent, like

the weaver bird, which will entwine any amount of silk thread and cotton in the wires of its cage for its amusement, and sometimes (as in an instance I once knew) hang itself in its own handywork, thus (though in a different way from the silkworm) weaving its own shroud. Other birds, like redpoles and sparrows, are liked because they may be bought for a penny, and a bird in its cage is company, an interest, is pleasant to look at, and breaks the monotony of solitary, sedentary occupation.

I am fond of statistics, and I hope you are so also. If not the parents they may be termed the handmaids of truth. I shall give you some relating to the Pets of London, stolen (but not without acknowledgment) from *London Labour and the London Poor*, the work of that most indefatigable and interesting author, Henry Mayhew, whose works have, I believe, done an incalculable amount of good, by exposing the tricks and rogueries of those who will not work, and by drying up the sources of ill-judging charity (or rather laziness) upon which they used to subsist, and at the same time by opening a wide field at first of surprise and

subsequently of interest and sympathy for many of those who, living amongst us, struggle to earn an independent livelihood in the midst of difficulties, illness and privations, the existence or even the possibility of which many of us had never dreamt of before.

Six thousand *live* larks (he mentions) are the annual number disposed of by street sellers. These birds occasionally require a fresh cut turf, the more clover leaves in it the better; and to supply this peculiar want the metropolitan larks keep in their employ some forty men, who cut annually six hundred thousand turfs, about six inches square, the weight of which is about five hundred and forty-six tons, and the value about £520; and which, if placed side by side, would reach fifty-six miles, or further than from Chester to Congleton and back again. Whilst on the subject of larks, I should not omit alluding to the "Emigrant's Lark," the story of which is told in his usual happy style by Sir Francis Head, who certainly seems to enjoy, in a remarkable degree, an exemption from the difficulty mentioned by Horace:

"*Difficile est proprie communia dicere.*"

“How hard the task most men can tell,  
To speak of *common* subjects well.”

The lark in question was a parting gift from a London bird-catcher to a friend emigrating to Canada, and was christened “Charley” after the donor. The vessel that took him out was wrecked in the St. Lawrence, the emigrant losing everything except “Charley,” which he saved from the wreck, and kept for three days in the foot of an old stocking, an extraordinarily narrow abode for the “messenger of day.” His owner settled at Toronto as a cobbler, Three different times one hundred dollars were offered for Charley. An old farmer repeatedly begged him of his owner, pressing on him in exchange a hundred acres of land; and a poor Sussex carter (who had imprudently stopped to hear him sing) was so overwhelmed by the “*maladie de pays*” at hearing the lark’s note, that he walked into the cobbler’s stall and offered his horse and cart (his sole possessions) in exchange for Charley; but the poor cobbler would sell him to no one.

Seven thousand linnets, three thousand bullfinches, seven thousand goldfinches (or, as we call them, jack nickers, their Staffordshire name

is Proud Tailor), fifteen hundred chaffinches, seven hundred greenfinches, two hundred nightingales (alas ! for they are very difficult birds to keep alive in a cage), six hundred redbreasts, three thousand five hundred thrushes, fourteen hundred blackbirds, one thousand canaries, fifteen hundred starlings, five hundred magpies and jackdaws, three hundred red-poles, one hundred and fifty black-caps, and two thousand *duffed* birds are supposed to be annually sold in the streets of the metropolis, the value of which, including parrots, would produce a yearly sum of more than five thousand pounds sterling.

Some of my hearers may not know the meaning of the term "*duffing*." There are some twenty "duffers" in London, men who earn their livelihood by "duffing," i.e. painting common birds (like sparrows and greenfinches) to represent some foreign sort, or to invent some non-existing breed. An old canary, faded and worn out with age, is re-dyed with queen's yellow ; blackbirds are imbued with a deeper tint by using the soot off the frying-pan ; a common parrot is painted marvellous hues, and its legs and beak varnished ; in fact, as one of

the "duffers" confessed, "the more outlandish a bird is made to look the more chance there is of selling it."

Parrots are often provoking birds. Like many of ourselves, they learn what is bad more readily than more refined accomplishments or little elegancies. A bird of this genus (belonging to a relation of mine) was always spitting and coughing. To cure him of his disagreeable proficiency in these accomplishments, they shut him up for some days with a large musical box, which was kept constantly playing the most beautiful airs. When he had finished his course of musical instruction, it was found that not only had he preserved his former vulgarities, but had added to them an exact imitation of the extremely inharmonious grating sound made by winding up the musical box.

Two thousand four hundred squirrels are annually added to the number or employed to fill up the death vacancies in London, and bring the street sellers about £210. As we are upon the subject of squirrels I will give you (from one of the newspapers) a decision of a Scotch bench relative to that animal: — "In a town not many miles from the Clyde, where a



batch of municipal authorities was elected last week, one of the new bailies presided the other day for the first time on the bench. One of the earliest cases brought before him was that of a servant girl who sued her mistress for her wages, which were refused on the ground that she had allowed a favourite *squirrel* to escape from its cage. The worthy magistrate, after hearing the parties, said: 'That although the lass was may be to blame for leaving the cage door open, yet the mistress was mair to blame than her, for she sud hae clippit the beast's *wings* sae that it cud na flee away!'"

The street sale of Pet dogs is supposed to amount to a sum of more than £9,000 annually; and a dog (putting the tax out of the question) is perhaps the most extravagant description of Pet to keep in London, owing to the facility with which it is stolen, and to the affection which prompts the owner to give any reward for it when lost. I see in the minutes of evidence taken before a select committee of the House of Commons on dog stealing, Mr. Bishop produced a long list of owners who had lost their dogs, and the sums given for their recovery, by which it appears that

Mrs. Holmes had at different times given £50, and that the Duke of Cambridge had been victimized to the extent of £30. There is an old story of a professional dog stealer (for it is a profession like other things) promising to procure a particular dog for a customer, but at the same time intimating that a certain amount of patience would be necessary, "as he had previously promised him to three gents, who would each in turn have to become possessors of the dog, and from all of whom in succession he should have to steal it before he could let him have the coveted prize."

Mr. Bishop states in his evidence that £18 has been demanded and given for the recovery of a dog, stolen, to obtain a reward for its restitution; and he also mentioned, in answer to a question as to the greatest sum he had ever known given as the purchase money of a Pet dog, that he had known a hundred guineas paid for a black and tan King Charles spaniel.

"Love me love my dog" is an old proverb, which speaks in the strongest terms to the identity of interest between the Petter and the Pet. In a Gloucestershire ballad a countryman says :

“Mine hostess’s maid (and her neam ’twuz Nell),  
A pretty wench, and I loved her well;  
I loved her well, good reaazon why,  
Becauss she loved my dog and I.”

Some like their dogs better than their friends or relations. You may remember the old lady who never thought of an apology when her dog had bitten a visitor, but exclaimed: “Poor Fido! I hope the excitement won’t make you ill!” Let no lady carry the love of Pets to the disagreeable length which distinguished a certain Mrs. Ursula, mentioned in the *Tatler* about 1710. A quiet gentleman pays her a visit, and finds her, in his own expressive words, “environed by four of the most mischievous animals that *can infest* a family — an old shock dog with one eye, a monkey chained to one side of the chimney, a great gray squirrel to the other, and a parrot waddling about the room with his toes turned in. The lady was seized with a fit of coughing; this awoke Shock, and in a trice the whole room was in an uproar. The dog barked, the squirrel squealed, the monkey chattered, the parrot screamed, and Mrs. Ursula, in her attempts to stem the Babel, was more clamorous than all the rest. At length

quiet was restored, a chair was drawn for me, where I was no sooner seated but the parrot fixed his horny beak, as sharp as a pair of shears, in one of my heels, just above my shoe. I sprang from my chair with unusual agility, and so being within the monkey's reach, he snatches off my new bob-wig, and throws it upon two apples that were roasting by a sullen sea-coal fire. I was nimble enough to save it from any further damage than singeing the foretop. The lady apologised, but in the middle of her harangue I felt something scratching near my knee, and, feeling what it should be, found the squirrel had got into my coat pocket. As I endeavoured to remove him from his burrow, he made his teeth meet through the fleshy part of my forefinger." The unfortunate man ends his story by saying that as he was abruptly taking his leave, and hobbling down stairs in heedless haste, he set his foot full in a pail of water, and down they both came to the bottom of the stairs, and *there* we will leave him.

The pug dog, like the golden pippin, seems nearly extinct. You may have seen a fancy portrait of one of that breed, whose tail curled so tight as to lift him off his hind legs. In

1851 a London pug sent out his cards for a dinner to the other metropolitan pugs; thirteen answered the invitation. In the composition of his dinner party he did not think it necessary to adopt the receipt of the Romans, who considered that the guests at a feast should not be less than the Graces, nor exceed the number of the Muses. A print of this dinner was struck off for private circulation, and is a curiosity in its way. It is called "The Exhibition of the Pugs of all Nations." The guests in the print are of the fatal number of thirteen. For good luck Mr. Bussey (a talented artist belonging to the Nottingham Mechanics' Institution) put an additional pug in the picture of this dinner he painted for me, which I have brought with me to-night. But a high authority has laid it down as an undoubted axiom, that the number thirteen can only be considered unlucky in the rather uncommon case of their only being sufficient food for twelve.

The first outlay in the purchase of Pets is only part of the expense. Food, cages, houses, collars, chains, have to be provided, which would swell the annual expense of the Pets of London alone to hundreds of thousands. There is ano-

ther outlay often entailed on their owners by Pets, namely, having their likenesses taken, which we cannot regret, inasmuch as it tends to foster art. By the time a rabbit has been immortalized by Herring, a goat or a stag by Ansdell, and a dog or bird by Landseer, their relative first cost will be considerably increased.

Many a portrait of former days owes its preservation not to its own unassisted charms, but to the respect with which posterity regards the lark, the dog, the squirrel, or other well-drawn Pet associated with it. But Pets in a general way may be called the cheapest of luxuries; they would not be so common, I may say so universal, were this not the case. Amongst the nuptial presents of our Princess Royal is a whip, the memento of a favourite horse. The butt is formed from a piece of the hoof, set in solid gold; the shoe of the golden hoof is formed of diamonds; the nails are fourteen rubies; the bottom of the hoof pavé with small diamonds; the handle is one of the horse's bones polished, round which twines a serpent in brilliants. So that we see the outlay on Pets, or rather on account of Pets, does not cease with their lives. I have seen a bracelet

made of a horse's tail; and I have myself a snuff-box made out of the foot of a favourite old charger and hunter. All professors of taxidermy, like our friend Mr. Bellairs,<sup>1</sup> know how often the body of a deceased favourite is brought to them to revivify, or rather, to use the technical term, to "set up;" and instead of stealing fire from the sun, they restore the fiction of life by wire, glass eyes, and mysterious stuffing, preparations and manipulations.

*Unstuffed* Pets receive funeral honours, and have stones erected and epitaphs composed to their memory; like that well known one of Cowper on his hare "Puss,"<sup>2</sup> or that one written by Mr. Warburton of Arley to the memory of a favourite hunter called A B C, whose fame will probably by his epitaph survive longer than that of most equine celebrities:

"I laid his bones beneath the greenwood tree  
And wept like childhood o'er my A B C."

Owners of Pets in their wills not unfrequently

<sup>1</sup> A Chester birdstuffer and numismatist.

<sup>2</sup> *Hic jacet qui totum novennium vixit Puss. Siste paulisper, qui præteriturus es, et tecum sic reputa:—Hunc neque canis venaticus nec plumbum missile nec laqueus nec imbres nimii confecere: tamen mortuus est — et moriar ego.*

bequeath sums and annuities for the support of those favourites they may leave behind them ; what per-centage legacies left to Pets may pay government I know not, but we consider they should be placed in the same category as nearest relations. Sometimes to insure the greatest possible care an annuity is left to an individual to be paid as long as the Pet may survive ; and under these circumstances dogs, cats, birds, &c., attain most patriarchal ages, which occasionally raises in one's mind the same suspicion as that under which the agents of West Indian properties in former days laboured, whose slaves and bullocks were immortal ; and one is reminded of the discovery made some time since in one of our great families when, upon sifting matters thoroughly, several *dead* people were proved to be in daily receipt of rations from the great house. In the parish of Spitalfields the interest of some hundreds is divided half-yearly between six poor widows, and the *tradition* in the parish is that the money was originally left for the support of cats and dogs.

Pigeons are frequently kept by boys in the poorer parts of our manufacturing towns, and any barrister on this circuit should, amongst



his other multifarious accomplishments, be intimate with the mysteries of pigeon keeping, as pigeon stealing is very prevalent, pigeon fanciers being constantly on the watch to guard their own birds and to seduce the affections of those belonging to other people ; like the definition of fencing in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*: "The great secret is to give and not to receive a blow." One of the most alluring baits is salt — the pigeons, like the vagabond Sepoys, "not being true to their salt," but seeking it everywhere. One of the great uses of pigeons as messengers is now at an end, since the voiceless and invisible throb of the electric wire has concentrated Europe. But before we spoke with lightning, pigeon expresses were most extensively employed by financiers, politicians, gamblers, and the press. Lovers' doves are now only the carrier pigeons of the past, as they have long since succumbed to the prosaic penny certainty of a queen's head.

Perhaps the most remarkable instance of the successful employment of pigeons was at the time of the death of Louis Philippe's eldest son, the Duke of Orleans. He broke his neck in jumping out of his carriage as his horses

were running away in Paris. The event happened after the publication of the daily papers in that capital, and an account of it appeared *next* morning in the *Times* (which had received the news of the catastrophe by pigeon express), and as that paper was published earlier than any Parisian morning paper, the tragedy was actually known, by means of the press in London, before it appeared in print at Paris. But, as I said before, pigeons must yield to the electric telegraph, which probably within half an hour of its perpetration, conveyed to the office of the *Times* the news of the diabolical attempt to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon at the Opera at Paris last night,<sup>1</sup>—an attempt which Europe may thank Providence has failed.

I must not omit in my list of Pets the *Cat*, an animal generally supposed to possess more local than individual attachment; but which still must possess some very peculiar attractions, when in former days an old woman would risk the chance (which chance, if she happened to be ugly, would probably have proved a certainty) of being burnt as a witch sooner than

<sup>1</sup> Orsini's attempt, January 14th, 1858. This Paper was read on the 15th, at Chester.

abjure the pleasure of her cat's company. Cats in the country almost invariably become poachers, and soon discover to their subsequent cost that a rabbit is as easily killed and is a larger and more savoury meal than a rat or a mouse. They end a short life in the keeper's trap, no animal known being so easily caught; either the bump of caution is non-existent or entirely swallowed up by that of curiosity: Mr. Snape<sup>1</sup> must decide this point. It has been calculated that there is one cat to every ten inhabitants. A *Cat* census, according to the act of parliament for regulating the census (which takes account of those that *sleep* in a particular house on a particular night), would fail, as cats, being out and awake at that period, would universally escape; like the lady of a certain age, who remained awake the whole census night that she might by this stratagem avoid being counted amongst those who *slept* in the house, and have to give up her years. Supposing the population of London to consist of two millions (rather within than without the fact), going upon the calculation I have before stated of one cat to ten inhabitants, the metropolis must be gar-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Snape gave the first lecture to the Mechanics' Institution on Phrenology.

risoned by an army of two hundred thousand cats ! Shade of Whittington, rejoice ! — it is enough to make you turn again in your grave ! Dogs and cats must be fed, and in addition to those that are supported by scraps at home and that forage for themselves, one thousand men earn their livelihood principally by retailing cat-and-dog's-meat, supplied to them wholesale by the knackers, who boil down annually fifty-two thousand horses ; and the London public pay for this article one hundred thousand pounds annually, besides what they may buy for their own use under the impression of its being beef. One old lady was mentioned in the papers a short time since, whose peculiar mania showed itself in keeping open house, or rather open roof, for all stray cats. She daily bought a quantity of horseflesh, with which she strewed the roof of her own and neighbouring houses ; and you can easily fancy the pandemonium on the slates which was the nightly result, and how much her neighbours must have lamented that the civilization of the nineteenth century prevented them from making a bonfire of her. Coachmen and grooms make a Pet of the stable cat, and devote some of their spare time

to teaching it to jump through their hands—the beginning, and generally the end, of a cat's education and accomplishments.

From the account I have given you of the street sale only of Pets in London, you may form some idea of the money spent upon them throughout England, putting out of the calculation sporting dogs and those kept for fighting purposes, rat killing, badger baiting, &c. But you can hardly imagine how great and generally diffused must be the pleasure and interest resulting from this outlay. It is not absolutely necessary that a Pet should be locomotive. I have already alluded to Picciola; and a geranium, a myrtle, or a musk-plant (a particular favourite of the inhabitants of towns, as it will, like the *ancuba japonica*, flourish anywhere) has helped to welcome many a labouring man on his return home to his small town room, and given many a pleasant moment to the wearied and overtasked sempstress. As a dealer in flowers once said: "Them that sits working all day is *werry* fond of a sweet flower." In the country you will generally find that a pretty show of flowers outside the cottage is an almost certain index of comfort and sobriety within.

We have some instances of Pets belonging to Communities. The Rows and the Walls may be called your Pets. You know there is nothing so complete as the latter in England, nor anything like the former in the world.

At Berne in Switzerland the *Bear* is a sort of patron saint, appearing on their coins, public buildings, &c.; and some bears are still always kept in a pit at the entrance of the town at the expense of the canton. They used in former days to enjoy an estate of their own; but when Buonaparte took possession of Switzerland he showed no forbearance, but, pocketing the bear's real and personal property, he sent off the Bernese household gods in bondage to the Jardin des Plantes at Paris.

I have spoken of the Pets of Communities. I will now give you an instance of Communities being Pets. I refer to bees, in which many take great pleasure and interest, like Cotton, who has written an amusing little pamphlet about them called the *Conservative Bee Keeper*, and he seems to know the inmost thoughts, politics and arrangements of his bees as well as if he had in a previous state of existence been a queen bee himself. This is one of the

many cases in which the fancy of the individual has brought about a public good. When Cotton went out as chaplain to the Bishop of New Zealand he took with him several swarms of bees, and succeeded, in spite of the opposition of the sailors, who voted his bees a bore, in bringing one or more hives safe to their destination. From that time the clover, which, as I understand, had never previously seeded in that island, became prolific by the dispersion of the farina and the fecundizing of the flower through the instrumentality of Cotton's bees.

Rookeries, heronries, the large owls at Arundel Castle, are other instances of communities that are considered sacred, with only a limited liability to injury. Talking of owls, it may interest you to know that the Pet of Miss Florence Nightingale (whose name will ever be a household word wherever the nervous Saxon is spoken — and where is it not?) was a little owl which (when she was travelling some years since in Greece) had fallen from its nest in the Parthenon, and which she rescued from the torturing hands of some boys. She took it to England, and, curiously enough, it died on the very day she sailed on her mission of mercy to the East.

We find sometimes a future Pet adopting a community and forcing itself into notice, like the fireman's dog existing some time since, which attached itself to the brigade, and seemed in the most unaccountable way to be cognizant of and present at every fire which took place — a Nero on four legs. He must have been the ancestor of a similar dog whose likeness appeared a short time since in the *Illustrated News*, the property of a fireman, and who, with his master, had been the means of saving many lives, and, like other benefactors, had been presented with a testimonial in the shape of a new collar.

Many regiments have animals attached to them, which head their bands as they march past. In some cases the animal represents the country where the regiments recruit. Thus the gallant 23rd, a Welsh regiment, is always headed by a goat; the one they now have is the present of her Majesty to replace the one which succumbed in the Crimean campaign. Another regiment is accompanied by a sheep; another by a dog; and one of the 70th's, three of which have the elephant on their colours, have or had an elephant, as I once found to



my cost, for having on a very cold day cantered up to Edinburgh Castle from the Cavalry Barracks (as member of a court martial), I desired the orderly in attendance to put my charger up in the nearest stable. When the court martial was over I went in search of my horse, and found him bathed in perspiration and trembling with fright, with the regimental elephant standing guard over him, waving his trunk backwards and forwards with a pendulum movement in a solemn way, which had a sort of mesmerizing and fascinating influence on my paralysed steed.

Most of the Highland regiments adopt a red deer. The 93rd (so gloriously distinguished where all were brave as "the thin red line tipped with steel," which scorned to throw themselves into square at Balaclava, but in line received and broke the shock of the Russian cavalry) some years ago was quartered in the Royal Barracks at Dublin with my old regiment, and possessed a magnificent red deer called "Donald." Not unfrequently, on our return to our quarters after mess, Donald would be found standing at the top of our stairs "belling," as a deer's note is called (but

you must not fancy that it has as musical a sound as that of *your* nine o'clock Cathedral bell, for it more resembles the roaring of a lion than any other sound). I assure you that it was a difficult thing occasionally to get past him to bed without being knocked down stairs, if Donald happened to be out of temper. Donald was not partial to civilians — particularly averse was he to any one dressed in greasy garments, who might come “between the wind and his nobility;” and I have seen him charge and roll in the dust, one after the other, the Irish lads who, with open mouths and hands in their pockets, were taking in all the glory and pomp of the guard-mounting. At last he became so vicious they were obliged to deprive him of his “branching honours” after he had hurt some men seriously, to the great disgust of the soldiers of the 93rd, who “could na just see why they should have cut off *puir* Donald’s horns, because he whiles poked a bodie.” One day he very nearly attacked a fat, turbaned Indian magnate, who had been invited to witness the guard-mounting. His being surrounded by the officers of the 93rd alone saved him from being rolled over, shawls and turban,

in the dust; as it was, the deer let him off with a scrape. Gay gives a good description of a stag exchanging by degrees his wildness for a familiarity which, according to the old proverb, had "bred contempt :

At first, within the yard confined,  
He flies and hides from all mankind;  
Now bolder grown, with fixed amaze  
And distant awe presumes to gaze;  
Munches the linen on the lines,  
And on a hood or apron dines;  
He steals my little master's bread,  
Follows the servants to be fed;  
Nearer and nearer now he stands  
To feel the praise of patting hands;  
Examines every hand for meat,  
And though repulsed disdains retreat;  
Attacks again with levelled horns,  
And man that was his master scorns."

The Seventh Fusileers had once a bear on their establishment, which for some time conducted himself in a very exemplary manner. But one day, during the temporary absence of the regiment, Bruin meanly took advantage of his opportunity by hugging the sergeant-major's wife so closely as nearly to prove fatal to her; and he was pistoled accordingly. He seems to

have been more serviceable to his corps in death than in life, as his skin was employed in repairing all the faulty grenadier caps in the regiment, and his fat was appropriated by the officers for the special benefit of the natural covering of their own heads.

Dogs are certainly the most curious, as they are the most usual and constant of Army Pets. It is a very uncommon thing to meet with any regiment which has not some dog or dogs, either public property or adopted by some particular troop or company. A brother officer and myself had both of us dogs which used to play together all day; but the instant they heard the dinner-sound they were off at once up the staircases of different wings of the barracks, to make the round of their master's respective troops.

One dog may be seen devoting itself solely to the band, taking notice only of the musicians, attending band practice with untiring punctuality, and during that time sitting perfectly still in an attitude betokening the greatest pleasure and attention.

Another dog never left the main guard, but turned out with all the reliefs, visited all the

sentries, and was upon the most intimate terms with the soldiers who composed the guard. When they were relieved, he paraded with them, but as they marched off he always returned to the guard-room with the new guard. All regiments in turn shared his affection, which however never survived the period of duty.

Another regimental dog was christened by the men "the Adjutant," as he was always the first on parade and the last off, and whilst the parade was forming would lie down in some central position.

The First Royal Cheshire Militia had not been embodied three days before two dogs were in constant attendance, no one knew whence they came nor how they came, but there they were. One of them was always first on parade, but *his* peculiar mania was as soon as he heard the word "dismiss" to be first through the archway leading from the guard-room to the armoury. It was in vain any man tried to be there before him; it was in vain any one tried to stop him; he always carried his point. *That* was *his* eccentricity.

The fancy of sailors for Pets is a thing of

very old standing. Æsop's fable of the monkey and dolphin begins thus : *Εθους οντος τοις πλεουσι Μελιταια κυνιδια και πιθηκους επαγεσθαι προς παραμυθιαν του πλου πλεων τις ειχε συν εαυτω και πιθηκον, &c.* "It being the custom for navigators to take with them Maltese dogs *and monkeys for the amusement of the ship's company*, a certain sailor had with him a monkey," &c. Sailors very often adopt as their favourites something among the live stock, whether it be a goose, a pig, a sheep, or a goat, that may have shown extra intelligence and by its talents and agreeable qualities conquered for itself a claim to a prolonged existence. A lieutenant of the navy told me that on board one of the vessels in which he once served was a ram that acted the part of playmate in general to the ship's crew, and was regularly entered on the diet roll, and like the rest of the crew had his mess of coffee, grog, &c., served out to him at stated periods. He was never absent at mess-time, had a perfect knowledge of his own turn, and if any son of Neptune, through forgetfulness or wilfulness forgot it, he at once asserted his rights and revenged himself upon the offender by knocking him down. The sai-

lors had a sheepskin on board, dressed out in which during the time allowed for recreation some of the strongest among them in turn used to engage the ram; and great was the delight of the crew as each succeeding occupier of the fleece was rolled over, a result not to be wondered at when we remember that it is on record that a bull has been brought to its knees by a blow from the sturdy brow of a ram. The ram had one fault in common with his playmates, *i.e.* love of strong drink.

Whenever and wheresoever he could get grog he drank it, and this in the end was his destruction, as it has been and will be (to the end of the chapter) to many bipeds; for one day, during a gale, the ram came on board very much the worse for his potations below (of which an unusual stiffness of the tail had been observed to be an unmistakeable sign), and a lurch of the ship threw him overboard. No boat could live in so heavy a sea, had one even been lowered. The sailors threw him a rope, forgetting that it was easier for their favourite to imitate them in getting drunk than in grasping a rope. The poet says:

“He long survives, who lives an hour  
In ocean self upheld.”

But the poor ram's existence was not even so protracted. Sheep are proverbially bad swimmers. On the morrow of the storm, through which the sailors had to bewail the loss of their Pet, one of them suggested that it would be only shewing proper respect to the departed to give him a sailor's funeral; and as the reality was far away on the trackless billows it was resolved he should be buried by proxy. They therefore rolled up and shotted the fleece, which, animated by one of themselves, had so often opposed the animal it was now to represent in death, not forgetting the *boatswain's stitch* (which is supposed to be the last one, and passed through the nose), and the metonymy of the drowned ram rolled off the grating and plunged into the waves.

A regiment of the Spahis in Algeria adopted a lion's cub as a regimental Pet, which had been brought in by Jules Gerard (a French Gordon Cumming); but the experiment does not seem to have altogether succeeded, as the lion first strangled the goat (his nurse), then, like a mad Malay, ran a muck through the market place, attacked some Arabs, and killed some sheep and a donkey. After some further



exploits of a similar nature, he filled up the measure of his iniquities by strangling a horse and tearing two soldiers to shreds, and was accordingly banished to the Jardin des Plantes.

The Queen's Bays, when quartered many years since in Ireland, patronised a raven, which was of course called Ralph; no one ever heard of any other name for a raven, and a funny fellow he was. His usual post at Cahir Barracks was on the top of a crown surmounting a tower, which formed a sort of gazebo in the centre of the barracks. Here he would stand on sentry for hours, and woe betide any wretched half-starved cur who might have sneaked into the barracks on a foraging expedition. The first notice he would have of being in the wrong box would be a demoniacal scream behind him, and a bitter nip of the tail. Away ran the cur, yelling with pain and fright (not being related to the Arctic fox, which is said to catch crabs for his dinner by fishing with his brush), whilst Ralph held on like grim death, screaming and pinching. On passing the main guard he would drop off, and return in triumph to his gazebo. He was the terror of the Irish red-legged girls who came marketing to the

barracks, and many a cheese (I believe that is the correct term) they had to make with their petticoats to save their feet from being pecked. He delighted in mischief for the very sake of mischief. He would pull out the stuffing, and destroy the lining of any carriage to which he could gain access, although the very fact of his carrying on his depredations in secret showed that he was perfectly aware of the unlawfulness of his pursuits. He would enter any open window, and tear up all loose papers that might be lying about. In a subaltern's room the extent of the damage might be the destruction of divers unpaid bills; but Ralph was no respecter of persons, and had more than once ("maliciously and of malice aforethought," as the lawyers would say) in the colonel's quarters been caught prying into his official papers and tampering with his most secret and confidential reports. This did not make him an especial favourite with the higher powers. One morning the colonel, on coming down to breakfast, announced that his annoyances from Ralph would soon cease, as the bird's hours were numbered. The officers anxiously demanded an explanation, when it appeared that

as the colonel entered his sitting-room in the morning Ralph hopped out of the window with the last pill in his beak of a box of antibilious, which the colonel had just laid in for his own especial use. However, the result was not fatal; Ralph was moody and thoughtful for about two days, and then became more merry and mischievous than ever, although he must have swallowed a larger number of pills at a dose than Morrison in his most murderous days would have ever prescribed for a patient. Poor Ralph met with a violent end (not an uncommon case with Pets) at Coventry, having been shot there by some civilian by mistake, as it was alleged, but probably as a punishment for some act of petty larceny, to which he was too prone, everything being fish that came to his net, whether it might be half a pound of butter or a bunch of keys, those "troubled spirits of domestic life," as Albert Smith calls them.

My own earliest Pet was a mouse, caught in my schoolboy days, and highly educated. At that particular school we were all mouse tamers. The first process was conducted on the water-cure principle, breaking the wild spirit

of independence by letting the mice swim 'till they were tired. After the preparatory immersion had been undergone, their education was conducted on principles of decided kindness. Our mice knew and would come to us like dogs, and were most docile and teachable. I grieve to have to confess that in a moment of extreme poverty I disposed of an "admirable Crichton" of a mouse for the unheard-of sum of five shillings. "Toby" (that was his name) was a genius, knew his name, came to the whistle, leapt, ran up poles, opened doors, shouldered arms, &c. In the course of their education our mice often got bad falls, and the pharmacy we adopted in these cases is not the least curious part of mouseology. The fainting sufferer was phlebotomized by cutting off a link of his tail with a sharp knife; the drop of blood which followed this process generally brought the patient round. A *very* accomplished mouse might have been known by the shortness of his tail, as the senior wrangler may often be distinguished at the universities by the baldness of his forehead. Apropos of mice, I remember hearing of an English officer in a smart uniform being introduced during

the short peace to Napoleon the First at the Tuilleries as "Capitaine des Souris." The Emperor could not at first solve the problem of the English mice requiring a commanding officer till it was explained to him that the officer was a captain in the *Surrey* Yeomanry.

Mice and dormice rank among the cheapest descriptions of Pets, and are a common accompaniment of an Italian boy's doleful hurdy gurdy, or screaming organ. I remember hearing, at the time of the fearful discovery of the murder of an Italian boy by Hare and Burke (for the purpose of disposing of his body at Edinburgh for purposes of dissection), that the police, as one of the links of evidence against the murderers, set some traps about the room in the old house which was the scene of the murder, and caught the white mice which had been previously seen in possession of the unfortunate boy, and which had in the confusion attendant on the murder escaped.

When I was quartered some years since in Longford Barracks a brother officer bought a kid, which very soon became kid "du régime." Like the sailor's ram I have previously mentioned, he soon gave proofs that





Goats at the Barrel.

there was a liquor he far preferred to milk. The goat in former days was sacrificed to Bacchus (from the partiality shown by that animal for the vine); and from what I saw of my friend's goat, Sir John Barleycorn (were he deified) might with equal justice claim him as an offering to *his* shrine. As soon as he could get out of the stable in the morning, away capered "Billy" bleating to the canteen, from which he was generally brought back before the lapse of many hours in the arms of some stalwart dragoon, whose ale he had been sharing. But his first act, when he had partially slept off the effect of his potations, was to return to the canteen, whither he might have been seen making the best of his way, stumbling at every step as he crossed the parade. Never have I seen a more incorrigible case of habitual drunkenness, nor so heavy, dull and watery an eye, with such a can't-help-it expression as his. He was also a striking example of the effect produced by liquor in blunting the finer feelings, for

"Not a man could leave his can"

unwatched for a moment that Billy was not on



the table at once taking advantage of his opportunity.

My own peculiar army Pet was a racoon, bought from a strolling set of players who were passing through Gort, the most westerly cavalry quarter in Europe. After having become his proprietor I led Dick off in triumph to my stable. The racoon is a curious mixture of different animals; the colour and fur of a badger, the head of a fox, with the sly quick restless eye that distinguishes that animal. He uses his hind legs touching the ground from the hough like a bear, which he also resembles in his clumsy mode of climbing; and the *tout ensemble*, if you saw him sitting in a heap in the corner, gave one the idea of an immense rat. According to the American song, which I saw no reason to gainsay, the animal has the reputation in its native country for cunning —

“Possum up a gum tree and the sly racoon.”

I turned him loose in my stable, to the terror of my horses and the surprise of my dogs. Dick immediately threw himself into a good strategic position with his back to the wall, prepared to act either on the offensive or

defensive, as might be found necessary. Like Fitzjames —

“ His back against a rock he bore,  
And firmly placed his foot before :  
‘ Come one, come all, this rock shall fly  
From its firm base as soon as I.’ ”

The dogs' dinner coming in about this time, Dick gravely at once made for the trencher, and quietly helped himself, spitting and hissing at the dogs if they presumed to approach, whilst they sulkily yielded, paralysed by his impudence and queer looks. My ignorance of one of his peculiarities was very nearly the occasion of a most serious accident, for as my servant was examining in the dark stable the heel of one of my horses, which had suffered from too intimate acquaintance with a Galway stone wall, Dick came gently behind him and snatched away the lighted candle, which was providentially extinguished in the scramble (instead of setting fire to the straw, stable, and barracks, which was more than probable); and retiring into a corner with the dip, stripped the tallow off with a celerity and relish that would have been creditable to a Russian. Nothing came amiss to him — bread, meat, corn, tallow,

eggs. He was very cleanly, and omitted no opportunity of washing his hands (I can hardly call them paws) in a bowl of water, with which he was provided. He never ate anything without first washing it, sugar excepted, which he crunched at once. When I first bought him he used to wash the lumps of sugar, but a sort of reasoning observation soon proved to him that water has not the property of increasing the bulk of sugar, and he was not epicure enough to appreciate the luxury of *eau sucré*. He knew his name, and on being called would immediately begin to make an awkward descent from the beam of the stable where he dwelt, and commence a search warrant in my pockets. When he followed me about the barrack yard, at the least suspicious noise or sight he would stop short, turn his tail to the wall, and wait until all chance of danger had passed. His curiosity was great; the first visit he paid to my barrack room, he made his rounds, examining everything, and mounting boxes, chairs and table, as if he were taking an ordnance survey. I showed him a stuffed stoat, which he at once attacked with the utmost rancour and fury, and he had crunched the scull before

I could take it from him. Some time after he came into my possession, another troop relieved the one which had been quartered at Gort, and on the day after their arrival I saw, very early in the morning, a great commotion at the farrier's shop, occasioned (as one of the men told me) by my wild beast sitting on the bellows, and preventing the farrier from beginning his day's work. Armed with a lump of sugar I ran down. There sat Dick on the bellows, with the whole troop attending his levee, devouring an immense rat he had caught early in the morning, and showing his teeth and hissing at any one who made the least attempt to interrupt his repast. My voice and the lump of sugar soon set matters right; the sweet tooth prevailed, and he rattled to my side, leaving the farrier the domain of the bellows undisputed. Poor Dick was lost whilst I was absent. The course of the river that bounds the barracks and surrounds the officers' house at Gort is subterranean through at least half its course to the sea, appearing and disappearing in the most eccentric manner; and Dick was supposed to have been lost or drowned in one of those subterraneous streams whilst indulging in his

favourite pastime of rat hunting. His fate is enveloped in mystery.

I will now give you an account of one more regimental Pet. A troop of the dragoons, when quartered at Barnsley, adopted a rook, which soon made himself the despot of the barrack yard, and compelled all the dogs of high and low degree to acknowledge his sway. They objected to this at first, but he had a winning way of fixing himself just behind any dog's neck that insulted him, so that he could not turn and bite him, which was quite irresistible, prodding him at the same time well with his beak. His particular friend was the cook of the troop, on whose bed he always roosted, and used to awake him in the morning.

A butcher's boy, passing by the barracks and seeing a rook sitting on the wall, naturally struck at him with his whip, and broke both legs, but had himself to fly for his life to escape the enraged dragoons, who took the poor sufferer with the greatest tenderness to the hospital, where the surgeon set his legs and managed him with such skill that he was very soon dismissed cured. One day, about the beginning of February, there was lamentation

in the barrack yard; the rook had disappeared. "The morrow brought no news, and the day after no comfort !" but on the fourth day, to the infinite delight and amusement of the men, the rook re-appeared, bringing with him a Mrs. Rook, who bashfully remained on a tree there happened to be in the barrack yard, whilst the bridegroom was making himself quite at home, going the round to receive congratulations; and soon afterwards began to help his wife to build a nest on the barrack tree.

What a curious proceeding! He must have laid his plans wonderfully, for he must have intruded upon a colony of rooks as a strange bird. How could he (gay Lochinvar as he was) have persuaded the sable beauty to leave her ancestral elms, and fly with him "a banished bird condemned" in camps to roam? How could he have made her understand, and how could she have consented on the matter being explained to her, to come and live on a solitary tree (so contrary to rook laws) alone, and in a barrack yard? How could he have gently broken to her the inestimable advantage of the cook of the troop being his particular friend? How could he have exalted his own prowess by

whispering in her ear that he had drubbed all the dogs into abject submission, and that they could not call their bones their own? We cannot answer these questions. At any rate his caws had proved successful, for had not she smiled on his cause. She had allowed herself to be inoculated with the scarlet fever, and there she was a bride, expatriated and disowned by her race, overlooking a troop of dragoons. Sir Walter Scott, when he heard that his son (an officer of the 15th Hussars) was going to be married, wrote to the lady, warning her that she might some day repent in the words of the old ballad: —

“Dear me, but I’m tired of wandering;  
Dear me, but my fortune is sad;  
It suits not a gentle young lady  
To follow a soldier lad.”

If Mrs. Rook *had* heard this, like Mrs. Scott she disregarded it, and entered heartily upon her *rouge et noir* existence. She was not, however, as impudent as her husband. A Roman matron was praised for remaining at home and spinning wool. The first part of a Roman matron’s character Mrs. Rook sustained to per-

fection; but instead of spinning wool she sat upon her eggs. .

I remember a curious instance of a Pet (and it is the last I shall bring to your notice) being sent, we will not say *by chance*, but rather *providentially*, to be the comfort of a sick couch. A lady friend of mine was thrown from her horse, and broke her thigh. As she was being carried home a very pretty spaniel appeared, which she had never seen before. It accompanied her home, and insisted, in spite of opposition, upon creeping into her sick room, and never left her. An owner was advertised for of course, but luckily and very singularly could not be found; and that little dog was the principal source of interest and pleasure to the sufferer he had adopted through her long and painful illness. Truly we may say

“God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.”

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And now what moral can I draw from my subject? That there must be some good reason for the general cultivation and popularity of Pets; that it is one of the many ways by



which lessons of humanity may be impressed on a child's young heart in the pleasantest and most lasting manner. Kindly affections are fostered by the means of Pets in those of a riper age. Pets cheer the bed of sickness, solace the hours of solitude, bring to mind absent or deceased friends, and soften and render more endurable the trials of poverty and sorrow.

“He prayeth well who loveth well,  
Both man and bird and beast.  
He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God, who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.”



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